personality traits of reporting/reviewing officers, the tendency on the part of same officers to hold on to routing jobs etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): The procedure for promotion to higher posts/grades was revised in March, 1989 by introducing a benchmark for each post/grade to determine the minimum suitability for promotion. The benchmark has been prescribed with due regard to level of the posts/grades to which promotions are to be made and the nature and importance of duties attached to them. The objective of this, inter alia, is to ensure high standard of selectivity in promotion to senior level posts. No administrative problems in following the revised procedure have been experienced or anticipated.

Non-conventional measures for family planning

2595. DR. YELAMANCHELI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state what are the non-conventional measures, such as application of natural herbs and barries, under the ICMR research programme for family planning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) The ICMR under the task force on anti-fertility plant products sponsored research programmes on application of natural herbs and barries. Laboratory explorations were carried out on rodents and a few cases on sub-human primates. Toxicity studies were also carried out and it was found that most of the anti-fertility plants and products were toxic; and as such further clinical trials were discontinued. As regards a plant product known as 'Benjauri' used orally by the tribal women of Bihar in the belief that it provides permanent anti-fertility effect when taken during the post-partum period, the available clinical data from the ongoing trials at the PGI, Chandigarh is not very encouraging.

Kickback money in Bofors deal

2596. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the then Minister of State for Defence had proposed that Rs. 64 crores and the additional liquidation charges from Bofors must be taken back; if so, what was Government's response thereto;

(b) whether Government propose to ask for part of kickback money from Bofors, acquired by the middlemen over Howitzer gun deal; if so, what are the details thereof and what is the response of Bofors; and

(c) whether the proposal for manufacture of Howitzer guns is being discussed with Bofors; if so, what is the cost of the project and how much payment is to be paid in this connection to Bofors?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) and (b) Having taken the opinion of the Attorney General for India, the JPC had concluded that mere suspicion did not provide sufficient ground for raising claims for reimbursement. The JPC also did not find evidence of any kickback.

(c) The details in respect of the proposed manufacture of the howitzers are being finalised. The amounts involved cannot be precisely assessed till the proposal has been finalised.

Testing of samples in Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory, Ghaziabad

2597. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory, Ghaziabad has not been approved and notified as a Government Laboratory under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, to test